

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
PRACTICE DOCUMENTATION GUIDE  
RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT OF DECLINING HABITATS**

**643**

**643 – STEP 1. INITIAL EVALUATIONS**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this step is to determine the landowner's desire to restore and manage declining habitats.

The landowner needs to be interviewed to determine the purpose and need of this action. The need for action should address a resource concern(s) for which the NRCS has authority to act upon. The purpose can be defined with the objectives of the landowner.

Determine what type of declining habitat the landowner wants to restore and manage.

**643 – STEP 2. INVESTIGATIONS, SURVEYS, AND INVENTORIES**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this step is to determine the feasibility of restoring declining habitat on the site. Soils, ecological sites, woodland site descriptions need to be consulted to determine the potential of the site for supporting the specific declining habitat to be restored. This step includes identifying all needed clearances including cultural resources, utilities, and T&E species.

**643 – STEP 3. PRACTICE DESIGN**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this step is to plan the declining habitat restoration and management project incorporating the objectives of the NRCS and the landowner. A record will be developed of the completed action taken. All required deliverables for the design, installation, and compliance are found on the New Mexico Statement of Work. This document will be followed to successfully complete the project.

Restoring declining habitat may require the application of other practices such as Range Planting (550), Fencing (382), and Tree and Shrub Establishment (612). The appropriate standard should be consulted when developing the site specific specification for the job.

Plantings will be protected from wildlife, livestock, and fire. A list of appropriate plant species will be supplied to the landowner. The list shall specify the quantity and type of plant material (seed, dormant cutting, bare root stock, etc) to be planted.

The landowner will provide the contractor the appropriate specifications, job sheets, and statement of work. Excess materials will not be provided to the landowner or the contractor. Standards are to assist the planner with the design of the practice. Specifications are to assist the landowner/contractor with the implementation of the practice.

**643 – STEP 4. INSTALLATION**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this step is to document all variations from the specifications. As built drawings and technical notes are used to document variances from the practice design.

**643 – STEP 5. OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this step is to assure the proper management and maintenance is carried out for the life of the practice. (See operation and maintenance in the practice standard 643 and other practice standards used such as 550, 612, 382, etc.)

**643 – STEP 6. COMPLIANCE OR SPOT CHECKING**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this step is to determine that all work has been completed to the standards required by the NRCS.

All specifications, drawings (including as built), job sheets should be filed in the case file.